

Farewell Dr. Furlong

By: Tasha Pippin

As some students may know, this semester will be Dr. Martha Furlong's last at Elizabeth City State University. After four years here, there are those who will be sad to see her go. Dr. Furlong's passion is writing; she received her B.A. in Psychology with a minor in Writing, and her M.A. and Ph.D. in English / Creative Writing Poetry from the University of Southern Mississippi's Center for Writers. She has taught everything from freshman composition and literature classes and Technical Writing to Contemporary American literature and African American literature, and of course, Creative Writing.

Dr. Furlong's relaxed teaching style and her way of relaying her passion for good writing, in any genre, to her students make. Dr. Furlong says that she hopes she has taught her students more than what was on her syllabus; She says she wanted them to learn that there is joy in learning.

"Everyday I have stepped on this campus, one class or another has made me laugh, or I have made them laugh – I don't have too much of a problem with class attendance because I believe my students appreciate my love for teaching and enjoy learning to strengthen both their thinking and writing skills critically and creatively – which college is about," she said.

Dr. Furlong says she has immensely enjoyed the students she has met and taught here at ECSU.

"I have had the most awesome students in my classes; while some have been deeply intellectual, spiritual or philosophical, others have been bright and creative and funny, and they have all been a joy to me in the classroom. All of my student have taught me so much." Dr. Furlong says the student body is [hands down] what she will miss most about ECSU.

Dr. Furlong says the most challenging course for her to teach was African American literature. Despite having taken African

American literature courses in her doctoral program, knowing plenty about a the wide canon of early African American writers as well as those who are publishing today, and even owning signed books of poetry from authors like Rita Dove, Marilyn Nelson, Tim Seibles, and more, she was nervous because "there is a school of thought that advocates that only African Americans should teach African American literature."

When she broached her students about this issue to see how they felt, she says "their response was gorgeous." They said, "Well, Dr. Furlong, African American professors teach all sorts of courses; you just teach us what you've prepared for us on our syllabus and it'll be great!" She added, "and it was even greater!"

Dr. Furlong's students say that they will miss her greatly and say things about her like "she has a quirky personality that made her classes fun," and "she's always really upbeat and says hi every time I see her."

Students on ratemyprofessor.com, a volunteer feedback website to voice opinions about professors, had nothing but good comments about Dr. Furlong like one student who commented: "Dr. Furlong taught us to appreciate the works covered. She went out of her way to find information on the authors not mentioned in the text to further our knowledge."

Another said, "She [Furlong] loves what she teaches and she gets right to the point. She tells you what you need to know and makes it interesting." Said another, "she gave assignments that actually pertained to the readings. She motivates the students to analyze works of literature so that they fully understand what they are reading and writing about. She also always knew what she was talking about!"

So, goodbye Dr. Furlong. You will be missed.



Single Mother Students: Making The Grade

By: Archie "A.J." Joshua

Text books, term papers, exams and children, for some young students these are all part of the college experience. Many college students have the dual responsibility of balancing books and bottles. Many of them decided not to give up their educational goals after having children.

Deidra Rainey, senior, is one such single mother. Rainey took a year off of college to have her child and then returned back school to further her education. "I never thought I would not finish my education because of my child. I knew I was alone and had to further myself for our future," she said. This path was not without sacrifice Rainey said, "I lost out on a lot, I lost out on

[some of] my college experience."

ABC news featured a story, "Balancing Books and Baby Bottles", in September 2007 about single fathers on college campuses. The piece showed many single parents decided to go to college because of not despite their children. Most student parents believe that furthering their education will help provide their children with better opportunities in the future.

Single parents now have a lot more help than ever before. Most colleges provide some form of day care service. Also special grants, loans and scholarships are provided with the specific purpose of helping single parents successfully navigate college. There are also organizations and groups designed to help parents stay ahead.

Although there is a lot of help out there for student parents, there is also much opposition." Many people feel that students who have young children should spend more time with them. "It just doesn't seem fair for the child if the parent is always gone at school," said Angel Thomas, senior at ECSU. Thomas is a child care worker and deals with small children ages 3-7 on a regular basis at her day care center. "I think it is selfish of the parent to leave their child for school, especially if the child is under the age of two because its there most important developmental years." Rainey says, "What would have been selfish would have been to say at home knowing that nothing was going to change for me or my child."

Mock Gunmen Enter ECSU Classroom

By: Jordan McAllister

On Friday, February 22 a gunman entered an Elizabeth City State University classroom. Professor Jingbin Wang in whose classroom the drill took place was not notified in advance.

"I was prepared to die at that moment," professor Wang told the News & Observer on March 2, 2008.

The drill happened a week after the shooting at Northern Illinois University where multiple people were shot and the gunmen turned the gun on himself. Anthony Brown, vice chancellor for student affairs, said everyone was notified via text messages and emails were sent out five days before the incident occurred.

"I was not fully informed. They should have done a better job letting everyone on campus know what they were planning to do," says a freshman who contests Brown's claim.

On Friday, February 22 at about 1:30 p.m. text messages were sent out to students warning about a gunman entering a More Hall classroom that afternoon. Soon afterwards a man entered professor Wang's classroom who was later discovered to be carry-

ing a gun made of red plastic. Many students said it looked like a real gun.

The gunman told everyone he had been kicked out of school and needed a lung transplant. He told the students to line up and that the student with the lowest grade point average would be shot.

According to published reports and eye witnesses, about ten minutes after the gunmen entered the room campus police arrived and told everyone it was just a drill.

"Unfortunately we learned from frightened students that result when live scenarios are carried out," said ECSU's chancellor, Willie Gilchrist in an email sent out to students.

Counseling was available on campus for staff and students affected by the drill through the University's Counseling and Testing Center.

Following the VA tech shootings, colleges and universities across the country started having emergency drills. UNC Greensboro held a drill in January but no students were present at the time.

Mr. McAllister reported this story from the sources cited herein. He did not interview the personnel involved.

Did You Know?

Elizabeth City State University was founded on March 3, 1891, when House Bill 383 was enacted by the North Carolina General Assembly, establishing a normal school for the specific purpose of "teaching and training teachers of the colored race to teach in the common schools of North Carolina." The bill was sponsored by Hugh Cale, an African American representative from Pasquotank County.

As ECSU's history continues to evolve, highlights of the last decade include a doctor of pharmacy degree in collaboration with UNC-Chapel Hill (August 2005); the first four master's degree programs in Elementary Education, Biology, Mathematics, and School Administration; and six baccalaureate degree programs—Marine Environmental Science, Social Work, Communications Studies, Aviation Science, Pharmaceutical Science, and Graphic Design; A Center of Excellence in Remote Sensing Education and Research (2003). Between 1999 and 2006, ECSU repeatedly earned national acclaim in American's Best Colleges (U.S. News and World Report Magazine) for its top five ranking in the category of "Top Public Comprehensive Colleges" in the south. The Education Trust national report recognized ECSU in 2004 and 2005 for its high graduation rate. NCAA Foundation and USA Today ranked ECSU in the top 10 of Division II colleges for the graduation rate of its student-athletes (2001 and 2002).



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